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LEGENDARY 1950s EC COMICS!

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NO. 14
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FEATURING...

THE VAULT-KEEPER

THE OLD WITCH

THE CRYPT-KEEPER

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BACK ISSUES!!

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CRYPT #1

CRYPT #2

CRYPT #3

CRYPT #4

CRYPT #5

CRYPT #6

W SCI #1

W SCI #2

W SCI #3

W SCI #4

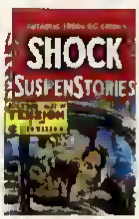
W SCI #5

W SCI #6

SHOCK #1

SHOCK #2

SHOCK #3



SHOCK #4

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SHOCK #6

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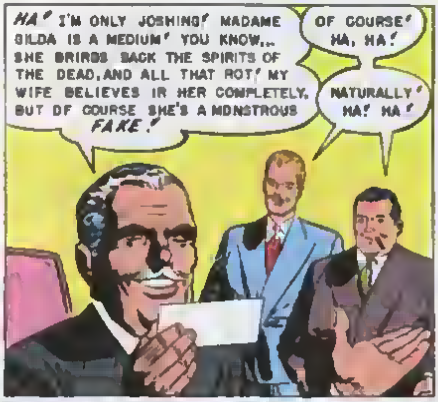
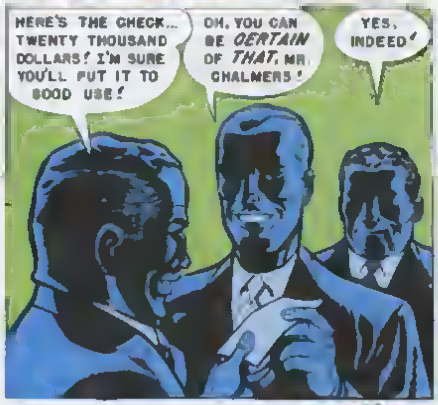
THE VAULT OF HORROR!

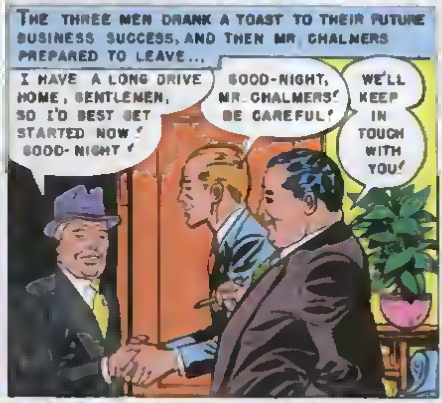
HEH, HEH! AH, IT'S GOOD TO BE WITH YOU AGAIN! AND IT'S SO *PLEASANT* AND *COMFORTABLE* HERE IN THE MURKY CONFINES OF *THE VAULT!* WELL, I'VE PREPARED A *SPECIAL TREAT* FOR YOU THIS TIME! THE STRANGE, MORBID DOINGS IN THIS STORY WILL GIVE YOU SOMETHING ESPECIALLY *WEIRD* TO MULL OVER.. IN YOUR *NIGHTMARES!* HEH, HEH, HEH! SO PULL UP A GRAVESTONE AND HAVE YOURSELF A SEAT... WHILE I RECOUNT THE TALE CALLED..

SEANCE!

MEH! TO BE TRUTHFUL, I HAD MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE PROPOSITION YOU OFFERED ME! AT FIRST, MADAME BILDA DIDN'T APPROVE! HA! HA!
OH.. SHE DIDN'T?
ER.. WHO IS THIS MADAME BILDA?


HA! I'M ONLY JOSHING! MADAME BILDA IS A MEDIUM! YOU KNOW.. SHE BRINGS BACK THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD, AND ALL THAT ROT! MY WIFE BELIEVES IN HER COMPLETELY, BUT OF COURSE SHE'S A MONSTROUS FAKE!
OF COURSE! HA, HA!
NATURALLY! HA! HA!


HERE'S THE CHECK... TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS! I'M SURE YOU'LL PUT IT TO GOOD USE!
OH, YOU CAN BE CERTAIN OF THAT, MR. CHALMERS!
YES, INDEED!


THE THREE MEN DRANK A TOAST TO THEIR FUTURE BUSINESS SUCCESS, AND THEN MR. CHALMERS PREPARED TO LEAVE...
I HAVE A LONG DRIVE HOME, GENTLEMEN, SO I'D BEST GET STARTED NOW! GOOD-NIGHT!
GOOD-NIGHT, MR. CHALMERS! BE CAREFUL!
WE'LL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU!

MR. CHALMERS LEFT.. AND THE TWO REMAINING MEN WAITED IN SILENCE UNTIL THEY SAW HIM LEAVE THE BUILDING AND ENTER HIS EXPENSIVE CAR
THERE HE GOES!
YEAH!

HAHAHA HAHA!
THE CHUMP! HE FELL FOR IT COMPLETELY! TWENTY THOUSAND BUCKS!
SPIRITS, RD LESS! MADAME BILDA DIDN'T APPROVE!

AND IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING! ONLY THE BEGINNING!
HA, HA, HA! IF WE WORK IT RIGHT, WE'LL TAKE HIM FOR EVERY CENT HE'S GOT!

NEH, NEH! WELL, IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, THE TWO CONFIDENCE MEN MADE QUITE A DENT IN MR. CHALMERS'S BANK ACCOUNT! BUT ONE NIGHT, AS HE ENTERED THEIR OFFICE WITHOUT THEIR KNOWING IT..
BOY, WHAT A SOFT TOUCH CHALMERS IS!
HA, HA! IF HE EVER FOUND OUT THERE REALLY ISN'T ANY BUSINESS AT ALL, HE'D HAVE A FIT!
SO! YOU'VE BEEN CHEATING ME! SWINDLERS! THIEVES! I'LL HAVE YOU PUT IN JAIL!
CHALMERS!
NOW... HOW DON'T SE HASTY, CHALMERS!
TO THINK I'VE BEEN SUCH A FOOL AS TO LET YOU DUPE ME, AND ROB ME! WELL, I'LL SEE MY LAWYER TOMORROW MORNING AND TAKE ACTION AGAINST YOU! YOU'LL SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIVES IN PRISON!
FURIOUS, MR CHALMERS STORMED OUT, SLAMMING THE OFFICE DOOR BEHIND HIM! FROM A WINDOW, THEY SAW HIM ENTER HIS CAR AND DRIVE OFF...
HE'S GOING HOME! WHAT'RE WE GOING TO DO!
...WON'T DO ANY GOOD TO LEAVE TOWN! WE'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE! AND I HAVE IT! C'MON!
THE TWO MEN RACED FROM THE BUILDING TO THEIR CAR! WITH A GRINDING OF GEARS, THEY STARTED OUT AFTER MR CHALMERS...
WE CAN'T AFFORD ANY TROUBLE WITH THE LAW! THERE'S ONLY ONE THING WE CAN DO!
YES.. YOU'RE RIGHT! WE HAVE TO CATCH HIM BEFORE HE GETS HOME.. AND KILL HIM!
IN SILENCE, THEY ROARED ALONG THE LONELY HIGHWAY FOR HALF AN HOUR BEFORE FINALLY CATCHING SIGHT OF ANOTHER CAR'S TAIL-LIGHTS...
THAT'S HIM ALL RIGHT! WE'RE LUCKY THIS IS A LITTLE-USED ROAD!
COME ALONGSIDE OF HIM! FORCE HIM OFF THE ROAD WHEN WE REACH THE TOP OF THE HILL!
3

THE TWO AUTOMOBILES CAREENED ALONG THE NARROW DESERTED HIGHWAY AT BREAKNECK SPEED, RISING SWIFTLY UP! *UP! UP!* UNTIL THE CREST OF THE HILL WAS REACHED, AND THEN...

NOW! NOW! HIT HIM!!

A SLIGHT TURN OF THE WHEEL... A GENTLE, YET FIRM NUDGE...AND MR CHALMERS'S CAR HURTLED FROM THE ROAD THROUGH THE BARRIERS, CRUMPLING AND BREAKING AS IT SOMERSAULTED, BOUNCED AND CRASHED CRAZILY DOWN TO THE BASE OF THE CLIFF, HUNDREDS OF FEET BELOW...

SEVERAL DAYS AFTER MR CHALMERS WAS BURIED, THE TWO SWINDLERS PAID THEIR RESPECTS TO THE GRIEVING WIDOW...

GOOD EVENING, MRS CHALMERS... MY NAME IS BEN BANTNER... THIS IS MY FRIEND, GEORGE DENT! WE WERE BUSINESS ASSOCIATES OF MR CHALMERS!

OH, YES, I'VE HEARD HIM MENTION YOU PLEASE SIT DOWN

GANTNER AND DENT OFFERED THEIR CONDOLENCES, AND THEN SLYLY TURNED THE CONVERSATION TO BUSINESS! AND WERE *THEY SURPRISED*...

WELL, GENTLEMEN... NOW THAT MY HUSBAND IS GONE, I THINK I OUGHT TO WITHDRAW THE MONEY HE INVESTED IN YOUR FIRM...

WHAT? BUT, MRS CHALMERS... FOR WHAT REASON?

WELL, I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT BUSINESS, AND I'M AFRAID OF LOSING IT...SO...

BUT YOUR HUSBAND HAD *ABSOLUTE FAITH* IN US! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO *FEAR!*

I KNOW, BUT... WELL, PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT! BUT I'LL HAVE TO ASK MY HUSBAND FIRST!

YOU—YOUR *HUSBAND?* BUT BUT MRS. CHALMERS, ISN'T HE...I MEAN, THAT IS

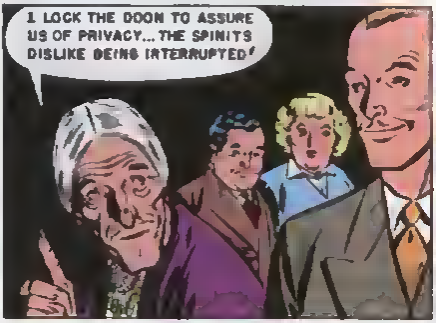
YES, HE'S *DEAD!* BUT I KNOW A PERSON WHO IS ABLE TO BRING HIM BACK FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD...TO COMMUNE WITH ME!

MADAME GILDA!

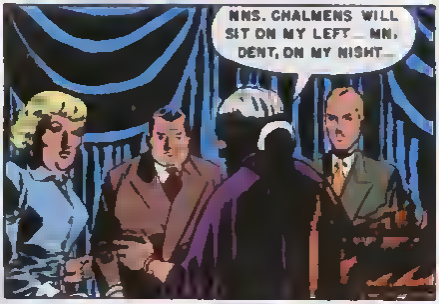
???

IN A FEW DAYS, GENTLEMEN... AFTER I HAVE SPOKEN WITH MY HUSBAND, I SHALL GIVE YOU MY DECISION!
...ER...YES, OF COURSE, MRS. CHALMERS! WELL, WE'LL BE LEAVING NOW! GOOD-NIGHT!
LATER, IN THEIR OWN APARTMENT...
BLAST IT! A FORTUNE WITHIN OUR GRASP AND SHE HAS TO TALK TO SPIRITS!
WE'RE NOT LICKED YET! WE CAN STILL GET HER MONEY IF MADAME GILDA GIVES HER OKAY!
MADAME GILDA! THAT CROOK!
THAT'S RIGHT, BEE! A CROOK! OUT TO MAKE A DISHONEST BUCK... AND IF WE MAKE IT WORTH HER WHILE...
HEH, HEH! MY, AREN'T THEY TWO SWEET BOYS? SO CONSIDERATE AND THOUGHTFUL! WELL, ANYWAY, THEY SCROUNGED AROUND AND FINALLY FOUND WHERE MADAME GILDA LIVED.. AND THEY WENT TO SEE HER!
IN ANSWER TO THEIR KNOCKS, MADAME GILDA HERSELF OPENED THE HEAVY OAKEN DOOR AND USHERED THEM SILENTLY INTO THE REARGE ROOM...
YOU WISH TO COMMUNE WITH THE SPIRITS, GENTLEMEN?
NO. WE WISH TO COMMUNE WITH YOU, MADAME GILDA, ABOUT A MUTUAL FRIEND... MRS. CHALMERS!
INDEED? MRS. CHALMERS IS A FINE WOMAN! WHAT IS IT YOU WISH TO SPEAK OF?
HER HUSBAND DIED LATELY... AND IT WOULD BE MOST PROFITABLE TO US IF THE SPIRITS DEEMED IT WISE FOR HER TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR BUSINESS WITH US!
...NATURALLY, IT WOULD BE PROFITABLE FOR YOU, ALSO, IF YOU COULD SOMEHOW COOPERATE A LITTLE FURTHER...
I BELIEVE WE UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER! WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?
5

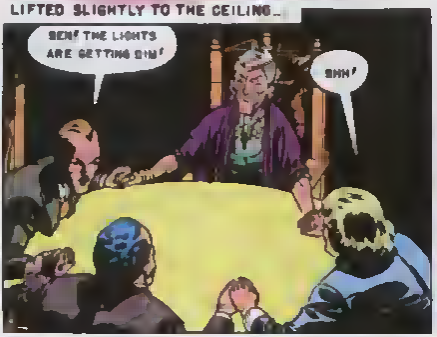
THE NEXT EVENING, MADAME GILDA ADMITTED DENT, GARTNER AND MRS CHALMERS TO THE SEANCE ROOM. SHE CLOSED THE DOOR AND LOCKED IT WITH A KEY THAT WAS ATTACHED TO A CORD AROUND HER NECK..



WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A DIM ILLUMINATION OVER THE SMALL, CIRCULAR TABLE IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOOR, THE ROOM WAS IN DARKNESS. SOFT AROMAS FROM STRANGE INCENSE FLOATED IN THE STILL AIR, AND FROM SOMEWHERE WEIRD MUSIC WAS PLAYING...



THEY TOOK THEIR PLACES AT THE TABLE AND JOINED HANDS. THEY FOCUSED THEIR ATTENTION ON MADAME GILDA... HER EYES WERE CLOSED, HER FACE LIFTED SLIGHTLY TO THE CEILING...



MADAME GILDA BEGAN A SING-SONG CHANT... AND AS BEADS OF PERSPIRATION FORMED ON THE BROWS OF THE MEN, MRS. CHALMERS STARED IN UTTER FASCINATION. THE LIGHT GREW DIMMER... DIMMER... AND THEY WATCHED AS MADAME GILDA'S FACE SLOWLY FUSED WITH, THEN MELTED INTO THE EBONY BLACKNESS...

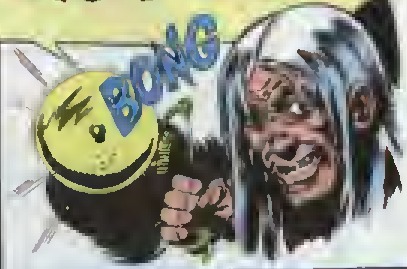
GEORGE DENT, SEATED BETWEEN MADAME GILDA AND BEN GANTNER, ROSE AND CREPT SILENTLY TO THE DRAPERIES THAT HUNG BY THE WALLS...
MRS. CHALMERS WISHES TO SPEAK WITH HER HUSBAND FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD. ARE YOU THERE, JOHN CHALMERS?
MADAME GILDA WAS IN A 'DEEP TRANCE'' THE MINUTES TICKED BY INTERMINABLY WHILE SHE TRIED CONTINUALLY TO MAKE CONTACT...
BLAZES! GEORGE SHOULD HAVE THE MAKE-UP ON BY NOW! WISH HE'D HURRY.. BET THIS WHOLE THING OVER WITH!
JOHN? JOHN, ARE YOU THERE? CAN YOU HEAR ME?
MRS. CHALMERS! LOOK! I CAN SEE HIM! THERE HE IS!
WRAITH-LIKE, ITS LUMINOUS FACE GLOWING DISTORTEDLY IN THE BLACKNESS, A FORM SEEMED TO FLOAT AND SWAY EERILY TOWARD THE TABLE. MRS CHALMERS, THINKING IT HER HUSBAND, SPOKE EXCITEDLY
OH, JOHN, DEAR! I KNEW YOU'D APPEAR! CAN YOU HEAR ME, JOHN? SAY SOMETHING TO ME!
...KEEPS COMING CLOSER! WHY DOESN'T HE SAY SOMETHING?
JOHN, THESE MEN WANT ME TO CONTINUE INVESTING OUR MONEY WITH THEM! SHOULD I, DEAR? SHOULD I TRUST THEM? WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER ME, JOHN?
FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! HE DOESN'T HAVE TO OVERDO IT! I SAY HE'S HE'S WALKING RIGHT UP TO THE TABLE!
JOHN! ANSWER ME! JOHN! WHA WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
NEY! STOP! YOU FOOL! YOU'LL RUIN EVERYTHING! GEORGE! STOP IT! YOU.. YOU'RE CHOKING ME!
JOHN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? STOP! STOP IT! YOU'RE. YOU'RE KILLING HIM!!
EEEAA-AGGH!!
STOP! THIS WAS NOT THE PLAN!
7

MY HUSBAND KILLED MR. GANTHER! HE STRANGLED HIM AND RETURNED TO THE SPIRIT WORLD!
NO, HO! IT WAS NOT YOUR HUSBAND! IT WAS MR. DENT!
GULP
WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
LISTEN TO ME! GANTMEN AND DENT BROUGHT YOU HERE TONIGHT SO THAT DENT COULD IMPERSONATE YOUR HUSBAND, AND ADVISE YOU TO GIVE THEM MORE MONEY! BUT I DIDN'T KNOW THIS WOULD HAPPEN!
..AND.. AND YOU WERE PART OF THEIR PLAN TO SWINDLE ME! I..I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
DENT KILLED MR. GANTNER! BUT HE CAN'T ESCAPE! THE DOOR IS STILL LOCKED!
HE'S HIDING OVER THERE, BEHIND THE DRAPERIES!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THIS, MIGHT HOW!
THE TWO WOMEN HUSHED TO THE DRAPES AND PULLED THEM ASIDE...
LOOK! ON THE FLOOR! IT'S MR. DENT! HE'S DEAD!
... HIS FACE! THE LOOK OF TERROR! HE'S BEEN STRANGLED TOO!
BUT...BUT A PERSON CAN'T STRANGLE HIMSELF! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
I KNOW THAT... BUT... NO ONE ELSE WAS IN THE ROOM BUT US! WHO...? HOW...?
-THE END-
HEH, HEH, HEH! YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE, KIDDIES! MAYBE JOHN CHALMERS DID RETURN, EH? REVENGE CAN BE A STRONG INCENTIVE. ANYWAY, IF YOU ASKED GANTNER AND DENT IF THEY WERE REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT CHEATING POOR MR CHALMERS, THEY WOULD'VE ANSWERED, "NO, NO... WE WERE ONLY CHOKING!" HEH! HEH! NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CRYPT KEEPER! HE'S GOT A TALE COMING 'ROUND THAT'S AS PUNCHY AS ME IS! DIG YOU LATER!

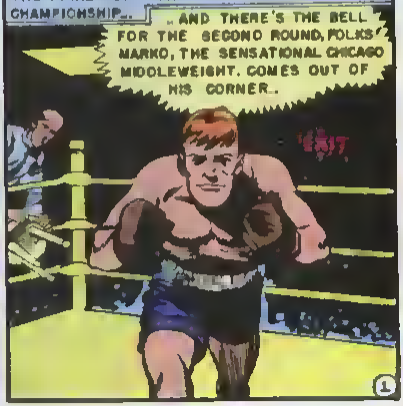
THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! NOW THAT THE *VAULT-KEEPER* HAS *WARMED YOU UP* I'LL *REALLY SIZZLE YOU* WITH *MY TERROR TALE!* YEP, IT'S YOUR HOST OF *THE CRYPT OF TERROR*. *THE CRYPT-KEEPER*, ONCE AGAIN! THIS TIME I HAVE A *DELIGHTFUL* LITTLE YARN ABOUT THE *MANLY ART OF SELF-DEFENSE*... *MARQUESS OF QUEENSBERRY RULES BARRED!* IT OUGHT TO *RING THE BELL* WITH YOU FIENDS! I CALL IT...

KICKIN' THE GONG A ROUND!



PATTY MARKO HAS FOUGHT HIS WAY UP FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE CHICAGO TENEMENTS WHERE HE WAS BORN TO THE BIG MONEY OF PROFESSIONAL BOXING! NOW HE IS NEARING THE FINAL RUNG ON THE LADDER TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP...

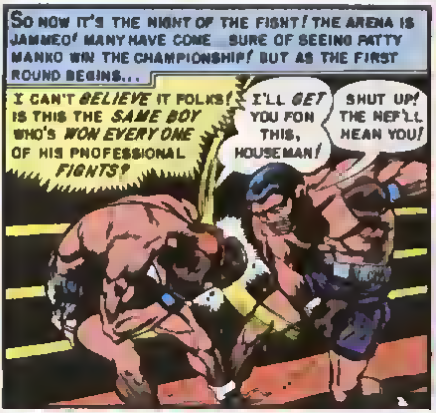


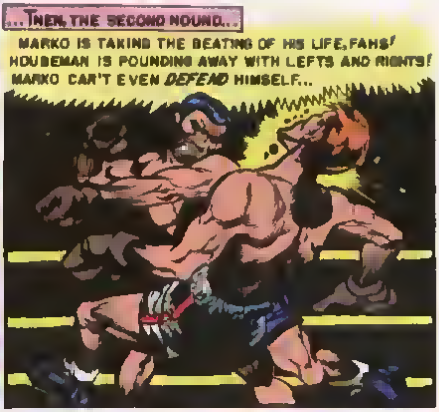
THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, FOLKS! THIS BOY MARKO, IF HE WINS TONIGHT, WILL BE CONSIDERED THE LEADING CONTENDER FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP! WOW... MARKO JUST LANDED A CRUSHING LEFT HOOK...
.. WILLIAMS IS GROGGY! MARKO MOVES IN WITH A RIGHT TO THE MID-SECTION ..A LEFT TO THE CHIN .. AND A SMASHING RIGHT CROSS TO THE JAW...
...WILLIAMS GOES DOWN! THE COUNT IS 4...5...6 ..7...
8..9.. ID YOU'RE OUT!
THE CROWD IS GOING WILD, FOLKS! PATTY MARKO HAS DONE IT AGAIN! THEY'RE CARRYING WILLIAMS TO HIS CORNER! BOY, HE IS REALLY ON QUEEN STREET! THIS IS MARKO'S FIFTEENTH WIN! HE'S HAD NO LOSSES! IT'S HIS TWELFTH BY KAYO! CHAMP? YUH LISTENIN'?
THE WINNAH... BY A KNOCKOUT... IN ONE MINUTE, SIX SECONDS OF THE SECOND ROUND...PATTY MARKO!
THE SCREAMS OF THE CROWD ARE DONE NOW! SILENCE CLOSES IN AS THE DOOR TO PATTY MARKO'S DRESSING ROOM IS SHUT! THE VICTORIOUS FIGHTER STRETCHES OUT ON A TABLE, AND HIS TRAINER BEGINS TO WORK ON HIM...
YOU WERE GREAT TONIGHT, PATTY! GREAT." JUST WAIT TILL YOU GET IN THE RING WITH HOUSEMAN... THE CHAMP! YOU'LL MURDER 'IM! MURDER 'IM!
NOW THE SCENE SHIFTS! IT IS AN HOUR LATER! PATTY RETURNS TO HIS APARTMENT... WHERE HIS WIFE AND INFANT SON WAIT FOR HIM...
I'M HOME, JUDY HICKEY.
OH, PATTY! LET ME LOOK AT YOU! WHY YOU'RE NOT EVEN BRUISED!
HE DIDN'T LAY A GLOVE ON ME, HONEY! I PUT HIM OUT IN THE SECOND HOU...SAY! DIDN'T YOU WATCH ME ON TELEVISION?
NO, PATTY! YOU KNOW I CAN'T STAND TO SEE YOU FIGHT! I'M SO AFRAID YOU'LL GET HURT!
2

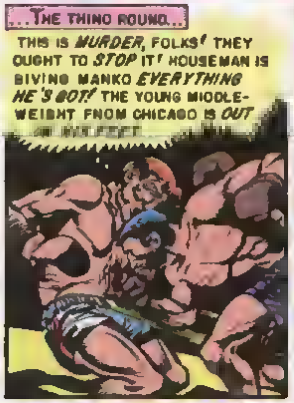
LISTEN, JUDY! NOBODY'S GONNA HURT ME! AN' WHEN I'M CHAMP, I'M GONNA BUY A LITTLE HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY FOR YOU AN MICKEY...
I KNOW, PATTY, I KNOW! COME! LET'S LOOK AT HIM!
WE FOLLOW THE YOUNG FIGHTER AND HIS LOVELY WIFE ACROSS THEIR APARTMENT TO THE NURSERY! THEY STAND BESIDE THE CHILD'S CRIB
LOOK AT THE BUILD ON 'IM! A HEAVY-WEIGHT...THAT'S WHAT HE'S GONNA BE!
NOT IF I CAN HELP IT, HONEY! MICKEY'S GOING TO GO TO COLLEGE!
YOU MEAN YOU DON'T WANT HIM TO BE A FIGHTER LIKE HIS OLD MAN, EH?
YOU DON'T BLAME ME, DO YOU?! .. WHAT WAS THAT? IT SOUNDED LIKE SOMEONE AT THE DOOR!
WE MOVE BACK INTO THE LIVING ROOM! TWO MEN STAND THERE...
HEY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA OF BUSTIN' INTO MY PLACE WITHOUT BEING INVITED? NOW SCRAM!
TAKE IT EASY, MARKO! SOMEBODY WANTS TO TALK TO YOU! C'MON!
I'M NOT GOIN' ANYPLACE WITH YOU GUYS! NOW BEAT IT! ANYBODY WANTS TO TALK TO ME CAN COME TO...TO...
YOU'D BETTER GET YOUR COAT, MARKO!
GASP! A GUN!
THAT'S RIGHT, MRS MARKO! YOUR HUSBAND WILL BE BACK SOON, SO DON'T CALL THE COPS!
GET GOIN', MARKO...AND NO FUNNY BUSINESS!
DO...DO AS THEY SAY, PATTY! PLEASE!
NOW, WE SPEED ACROSS TOWN WITH PATTY AND THE TWO MEN! THEIR CAR LEAVES THE CITY AND HEADS UPSTATE! FINALLY IT TURNS ONTO A SMALL SIDE-ROAD
SAY! THIS IS JAKE HOUSEMAN'S TRAINING CAMP!
GET THAT, SIS? THE PUS GKN READ!
TRAINING CAMP
JAKE HOUSEMAN
WORLD'S MIDDLE WEIGHT CHAMPION
NO TRESPASSING
3

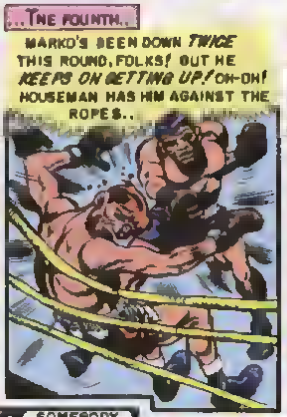
WE FOLLOW TRE CAR AS IT MOVES UP THE ROAD TO THE TRAINING CAMP SITE. THE TRAIRING-RING LIES IN DARKNESS, BUT TRE LIGHTS OF THE HOUSE BURN BRIGHTLY
C'MON INSIDE, MARKO!
I'D LIKE TO GET YOU INSIDE THOSE ROPES WITHOUT YOUR GUN, BIG-SHOT!
SHUT UP, AN' GET MOVIN'!
FINALLY, PATTY STANDS BEFORE JAKE HOUSEMAR, THE MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMP.
HERE HE IS, BOSS!
SIT DOWN, MARKO!
SAY YOUR PIECE, HOUSEMAN! I'LL STAND!
THAT WAS A NICE FIGHT TONIGHT, MARKO!
LOOK, HOUSEMAN! YOU DIDN'T SEND FOR ME TO CONGRATULATE ME! WHAT'S THE PITCH?
YOU'RE RIGHT, MARKO! OKAY! I'LL GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS! IT'S ABOUT YOUR NEXT FIGHT. THE ONE YOU'RE GONNA HAVE WITH ME! HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT... TO LOSE IT?
DROP DEAD, HOUSEMAN!
LOOK, KID! DON'T GET SO TOUCHY! I CAN MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE! SAY FIFTY GRAND! THAT'S MORE THAN YOU'LL MAKE BY WINNING IT!
I'M GOIN' INTO TRAT RING TO WIN, HOUSEMAR! YOU CAN'T BUY ME! YOU CAN TAKE YOUR DOUGH AND
LEMME GIVE HIM A SOIN' OVER, BOSS!
NEVER MIND! HE'LL CHANGE HIS MIND!
I DON'T THINK I WILL, HOUSEMAN!
WE'LL SEE, SMART BUY! YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE TO DO BUSINESS! OKAY, SLIM! GET 'IM OUT OF HERE!
SURE, BOSS! C'MON, PUG!
4

HEH, HEH! NICE CLEAN SPORTSMAN, THE CHAMP...EH, KIDDIES? WELL, YOU AIN'T SEE NUTHIN' YET! NOW, WE MOVE AHEAD TWO MONTHS TO THE DAY BEFORE THE FIGHT! PATTY IS TNAINING HAND AT HIS CAMP
WEC
OKAY, PATTY! THAT'LL BE ALL! GET INTO A SHOWER! YOU'RE AS READY AS YOU'LL EVER BE!
YOUN BOY LOOKS TERRIFIC, PHIL! I'M WRITING HIM UP AS THE FAVORITE!
JUDY! WHAT ANE YOU DOIN' HERE? WHERE.. WHERE'S MICKEY?
SOB...SOB... I'VE GOT TO TALK TO YOU, PATTY!
C'MON IN HERE! WHAT IS IT? YOU'VE BEEN CRYING!
IT'S THE BABY! HE'S BEEN KIDNAPPED! I... SOB...I FOUND THIS NOTE!
BOXIN
FRIDAY
APRIL 10
MOUS VS
MAR
PATTY SNATCHES THE NOTE FROM HIS WIFE AND READS IT
'MARKO, IF YOU EVER WANT TO SEE YOUR KID AGAIN, YOU'LL LOSE THAT FIGHT TOMORROW NIGHT! AND DON'T GO TO THE COPS!'
OH, PATTY! SOB! WHAT WILL WE DO?
WHAT CAN WE DO? I...I'VE GOT TO THROW THE FIGHT.. FOR MICKEY'S SAKE!
SOB...SOB...HOW...HOW COULD THEY DO THIS?
DON'T WORRY, BABY! I'LL BET EVEN WITH THEM IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO!
POOR MICKEY! SOB! I HOPE THEY'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM... SOB!
5

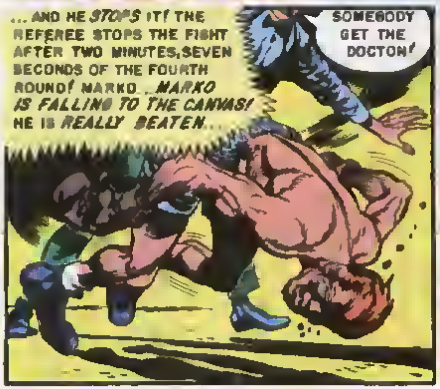

So now it's the night of the fight! The arena is jammed! Many have come sure of seeing Patty Manko win the championship! But as the first round begins...
I can't believe it folks! Is this the same boy who's won every one of his professional fights?
I'll get you for this, houseman!
Shut up! The kid'll hear you!

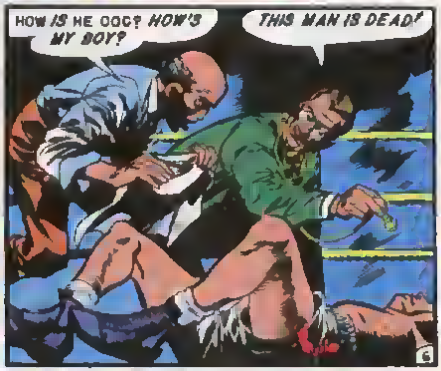

...Then, the second round...
Marko is taking the beating of his life, fans! Houseman is pounding away with lefts and rights! Marko can't even defend himself...


...The third round...
This is murder, folks! They ought to stop it! Houseman is giving Manko everything he's got! The young middle-weight from Chicago is out on his feet!


...The fourth...
Marko's been down twice this round, folks! But he keeps on getting up! Oh-oh! Houseman has him against the ropes..

Houseman lands a right and a left another right! The referee is moving in!


...and he stops it! The referee stops the fight after two minutes, seven seconds of the fourth round! Marko...Marko is falling to the canvas! He is really beaten...
Somebody get the doctor!


How is he doc? How's my boy?
This man is dead!

NOW WE'RE NEAR THE END OF OUR LITTLE TALE! IT TAKES PLACE ABOUT SIX MONTHS LATER! JAKE HOUSEMAN IS IN HIS TRAINING CAMP... GETTING READY TO 'DEFEND HIS TITLE' ONCE MORE! IT IS NIGHT! THE CAMP LIES IN DARKNESS! THE TRAINING-RING IS DESERTED! A LIGHT BURNS IN THE HOUSE!

SUDDENLY THE DOOR TO THE HOUSE SWINGS OPEN! THE FOUL ODOR OF ROTTED FLESH FILLS THE ROOM! JAKE SPINS AROUND...

MARKO! NO! IT CAN'T BE!

THE DECOMPOSING FIGURE MOVES FORWARD! JAKE BACKS AWAY...THEN DASHES FOR THE DOOR...

HELP! SLIM! SID! HELP ME!

JAKE DASHES OUT OF THE HOUSE! THE THING STUMBLES AFTER HIM! NEAR HIS CAR HE TRIPS OVER TWO CRUMPLED FORMS ON THE GROUND... THEIR FACES MASHED TO BLOODY PULPS...

SID! SLIM! GOOD LORD! HE GOT YOU, TOO!

SUDDENLY THE SLIMY, MAGGOT-INFESTED THING IS UPON JAKE... DRAGGING HIM TO THE DESERTED RING...

LET ME GO! LET ME GO! OH LORD... HAVE PITY...

THE THING IS STRONG — STRONGER THAN IT *EVER* WAS WHEN IT WAS *ALIVE!* AND AS THE NIGHT DRAGS ON, A MACABRE SCENE TAKES PLACE THERE. IN THAT DESERTED TRAINING CAMP! *THE FETID, RANK, ROTTED CORPSE OF PATTY MARKO FIGHTS ONCE AGAIN!* WITH EACH LEFT HOOK, *CHUNKS OF FLESH* FALL AWAY FROM ITS *BLOATED FISTS!* *WHITENED BONES PROTRUDE FROM KNUCKLES...* *CUTTING JAKE TO RIBBONS...*

YAAAAAAAAHH!

HEH, HEH! YEP! AND WHEN IT WAS *OVER*, KIDDIES, JAKE WAS *OUT TO RIBBONS, LITERALLY* AS WELL AS *FIGURATIVELY!* IN FACT WHEN THEY *FOUND* HIM THE NEXT MORNING, THEY HAD TO *SCRAPE* HIM OFF THE *CANVAS* AND PACK WHAT WAS *LEFT* OF HIM INTO A *CHEESECLOTH SACK* IN ORDER TO *BURY* HIM! *CHARMING TALE?* I *THOUGHT* YOU HORROR FIENDS WOULD *LIKE* IT! 'BYE, NOW!

THE END

THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

It a been a while since my last remark I was given my sedatives and put in the closet for the winter

I've been unleashed to give my remarks on that old rot-bag VK The Old Hag—er Old Witch and you, mein rotting fuerher!

The bad ones 'Voodoo Death!' 'Midnight Snack!'', 'Two of a Kind!' "Southern Hospitality!', 'Seeds of Death!', 'The Howling Banshee!' and 'The Vamp!'" The good ' And All Through the House!', 'Beauty Rest', Star Light, Start Bright!', 'The Mask of Horror!' 'Take Your Pick!', 'Till Death!'" and 'Madam Bluebeard'

I'll soon be doing bio's of O W , then you, Crypty! Print my address, please!

Curt 'Crypt' Hovis — 3001 Edgewood PK, Marion, IL 62959

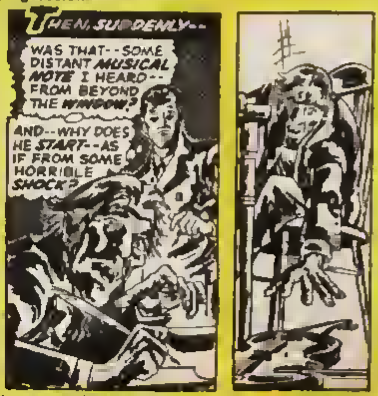
Now, send the list of the mediocre ones. —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Enclosed is a copy of 'The Music of Erich Zann' from MASTERS OF TERROR Please let me know if EC's Johnny Craig is in fact the artist of 'T M E Z ' Thanks

Elaine Radke — Gilbert AZ

I was a little skeptical when I first looked at the photocopies, it was as if Craig-like pencils got a Marvel house inker. But, if these are from the mid 70s (I think they are) then we're talking a 20-year gap between EC and this work, and a guy's inking can change. The clincher, tho, is stuff like this two-panel progression:



The composition and breakdown is pure Craig, if I'm any judge. There are other telltales.

More about my boy Johnny's inking. When we asked him to recreate some EC art (again, 20 years after EC!) he did so with an uncanny accuracy! What a guy! —VK

Dear VK

Who is supposed to be older out of the three of you?

I own SHOCK 1 2FIST 1 W FAN 1, CRYPT 12 and VAULT 11 and 12 and Glad HAUNT 2 Which one of these is the most valuable?

In order from my favorite to least favorite Vault-Keeper, Crypt-Keeper, Old Witch.

Ralph Daly — Shelbyville TN

When it comes to birthdays, maybe OW takes the cake! And, the cake takes a singing when the candles are lit! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper

I just received your EC Classic (#10) of PANIC I really enjoyed it, especially 'The Night Before Christmas' The last panel of Bill Gaines and his old crew was great I sure hope you will print more of these

Jack Barnes — Dallas TX

The EC Classics are oversized, 2-issue reprints on offset stock. Write for current list and prices —VK

Dear Russ,

A month ago you sent me a free comic It was a VAULT I already had this comic! I had been collecting EC comics for 2 years and had never missed an issue of CRYPT VAULT or HAUNT But one time I had missed a HAUNT It was #12

Can you please send it to me for FREE, because I cannot get checks or money orders And once you sent this fat kid next door 3 FREE EC COMICS! So please send it FREE

Mark Pieklelnalk — Utica NY

FREE! What am I, a soup kitchen? We sent you a VAULT, mine own title, but you want a copy of The Old Bag's rag? What are they putting in the water in Utica? —VK

Dear VK

Your comics are the best I love VAULT 12 I have three VAULT OF HORROR comics I have one CRYPT and CRIME and one HAUNT Your Zombie,

Jacob Zink — Indianapolis, IN

Dear VK

VK I loved your story "And All Through the House" in VAULT 4 It gave you that holiday cheer Could you tell me know what book the story 'Let the Punishment Fit the Crime' is in? Thank you

Nick Kostyk — Chicago IL

"And All..." was in 64-pg RCP VAULT 4 (which reprinted VAULT 33—will be our VAULT 24). "Punishment" was in VAULT 33—will be our 22—and already is in RCP VAULT 2. Confusing enuf for ya? —VK

To Russ Cochran & Gemstone

I have been ordering from you since late 93 and I just

wanted to say thank you. Without mentioning any names (DC), but thanks to their poor handling or rather mishandling of orders I said I'd never order comics through the mail again. With EC being hard to find, I figured I'd try one more time rather than do without. From the get go I have never had any problems or damaged merchandise received from your company.

Once again I just wanna say keep up the good work and thank you, plus restoring my faith in education by proving you know how to comprehend what you read unlike some people (DC).

Charles Vitullo — Somers Point, NJ

No names, please. The Anonymous Editor recently went thru his unindexed comics from 65-75, and was reminded of the fun 50s reprints of DC SF; DC and the other big companies traditionally focused on publishing with very little effort towards mail order.
—VN

Dear Vault Keeper,

I was both delighted and surprised to see you appear in the show 'Tales from the Cryptkeeper'. I traded my CRYPT comic book for a VAULT. I've also started a club in my classroom about comic books. It features you as the Comic-Keeper. I love your stories the best! Every story that you tell gives me goosebumps and chingles my spine.

You are a graveyard Alistair Cooke! You are my Idol! Your pal,

Vinnie Peone & Devan De Cicco — Saugerties, NY

Of course I would strike you as the literary type; who among the GhouLunatics totes a book? Ma! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

In RCP Vault #1, The Grim Fairy Tale, which was "For How the Bell Tolls!", was a great horror-illic tale. Did you really steal the fairy tales from the OW? In the end of the story you say we have to smell her cauldron, I mean does anybody want to?

Do you, CK and OW live together? If you do is there a competition for stories? Actually I like OW but some of her stories aren't good. If you print my letter could you print my address?

Kenny Van Dyke 14 — 468 E Forestwood, Morton, IL, 61550

Stealing from OW was like stealing candy from a baby—a baby on vacation! I'm surprised you can't smell her cauldron all the way to Morton, IL! —VK

Dear Russ Cochran,

I [am] a fan of Johnny Craig, Jack Kamen and Joe Orlando. I think they're the best artists ever, no offense to the other artists in the EC comics. I was wondering if you could write new stories because you just do the same ones over. I mean, I love your comics, don't get me wrong. Vault-Keeper a #1 fan!

Raul Alareon — Houston, TX

Anyone who loves us CAN'T be wrong! —VK

Hey Vault-People,

Issue #12 was excellent! My favorite story was "99 44/100% Pure Horror!". I have been an EC addict for four years and I have never come across an EC story I liked more except maybe Ray Bradbury's "The Handler" (in one of the 64-pagers). Along with Vertigo/DC's Sandman by Neil Gaiman, the entire EC line continues to be my favorite read. They take readers away from big superheroes, monster-sized weapons, etc. I have one question for you three. Are you three guys (CK, OW & VK) immortal? It seems so, since you are all so ancient. Until the CK marries the OW, make mine EC! Pleasant Screams,

Chris Edwards — Colmesneil, TX

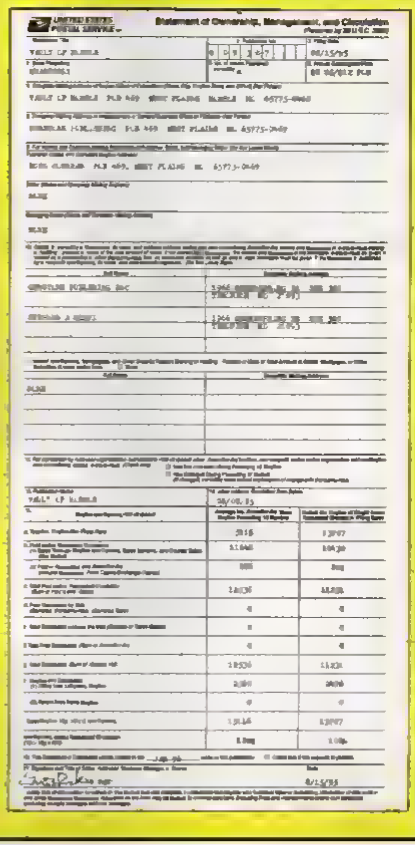
Catch "The Handler" in CRYPT 20, yet to come, or in 64-pg RCP CRYPT 6. It's an Old Witch tale, but I can't kick at losing out to Bradbury! When I review the GhouLunatic retirement plan, with my luck I am immortal! —VK

Dear VK,

The best part of "A Bloody Undertaking!" was Johnny Craig's artwork. I knew halfway through that Wilma was the vampire. Charlie was too obviously a red herring. But like I said, I enjoyed the artwork. A tip of the coffin lid to Johnny Craig. (By the way, Vaulty, Craig's rendering of you looks more like HBO/FOX's Crypt-Keeper.)

A much better story was "...With All The Trappings!". Besides being more original, the somewhat unusual setting lent a spooky atmosphere to the proceedings. Ghastly's creepy artwork was a definite bonus.

"Impressed By A Nightmare!" had an appropriately gruesome, blackly comical (pun intended) ending. Ditto for "The Death Wagon!". The tired device of creatures from the grave exacting their revenge was saved by the method



of revenge! The name of that car should a been the 'Deadsel'!

It just occured to me that if you were Polish you would be a Pole-Vault-Keeper!

Barry McCollum — Alton, IL

Hey! No more Vaultish jokes! —VK

Dear VK,

I just want to compliment you on your comic book. I enjoy reading it very much. I like all the stories in no. 13 and am looking forward to receiving the next issue. Have plans to order one of your t-shirts real soon. Keep up the good work. A fan,

B. Stopera — address unknown

"People who live in Brass Hearses" was EXCELLENT! I have the original VAULT #1. At the end of "Brass Huarses" was the kind of gore I like. Your comics are great! I have CRYPT #13, #10, and Vol 1 and #12. I have VAULT #10, #9 (the original #4) and #1. I also have HAUNT Vol 1 and 2 and the original #3. And, I have CRIME #12.

I recently saw DEMON KNIGHT and it was cool! I saw it even though I'm 9 1/2 and it's rated R. I've got it on tape, and I've got the soundtrack and the board game of "Tales from the Crypt". You can print my address.

James France — 118 Karen Lynn CIR, Feeding Hills, MA 01030

"Hearses" was in 64-pg Glad Vault 2; remember, those 64-pgers were reprints, too. The original originals were published in the early 50s. —VK

Dear Russ,

Hi! you don't know me but my name is Jared. I've only got 3 of your magazines: one is CRYPT 5, another one is HAUNT 5 and VAULT 5. The Vault-Keeper is my favorite. I am 12 years old. Russ, do you think you could send me a letter from the Vault-Keeper and a poster of him...please? thank you.

I got these magazines for helping my mom's friend move. I'm going to send for another magazine when or if I get money. I've been saving up to buy one. I've only got 4 dollars.

I really like the story "Sink-Hole!" by the Vault-Keeper.

Jared Gillett — West Valley City, UT

Hard-earned money spent wisely! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I think it's wonderful that you're reprinting the 1950s EC comics. I own about 5 or 6 of your comics and 24 EC comics in all. It's hard for me to obtain all of the ECs. I'd like to, so I'll be subscribing to all of the sci-fi titles and your comic, VAULT.

I really hope that you don't discontinue the reprinting of the EC comics, though it's likely you will soon as the establishment of the comics code banned the making of, and distribution of, ECs.

I **love** your comments at the end of each story, they're so much better than The OW's or CK's! With putrid and stagnant regard,

Christian Golden — Millwood, VA

Strictly speaking, the Code made EC's borderline economic situation too much trouble to fight for (as insidious way to censor, huh?). Since we don't have a similar threat, it'd be just pure economics that might get us someday. Keep buying! —VK

Dear sirs,

Yes [it is] I another time! I only write for give you thanks. Many times I've writted to American editorials but it's never the attention that you've [paid].

I wrote you to order subscriptions, comic-books, information — and you answer me (strange really!). I know that I don't know English very well, but with the help of a dictionary I think that you've understood me. Thank you.

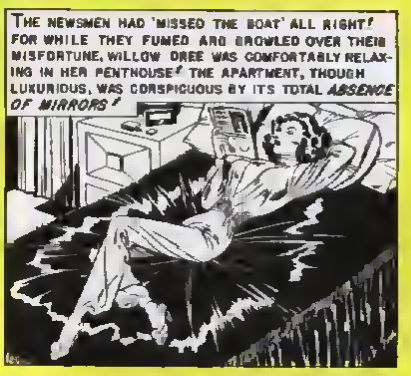
One month ago I discovered in Barcelona a book-shop (and comic store) named Gilgamesh where I can get the old EC comics. I know that I've [caused] you a lot of troubles, but it's finished. Some days ago I wrote you a letter to ask you if I can subscribe with peseetas, well. I don't know if you answered me but I've changed direction. It isn't important, now I can get CRYPT and SHOCK in Barcelona.

Well, already I've [said] all I have for saying. Excuse me another time, for I don't know English very well. Thank you for all.

Marc Gras i Cots — Barcelona, SPAIN

I love the way my foreign readers are able to express themselves in English—and, it makes my job easier, my Spanish is nowhere! Thanks, another time! —VK

NEXT ISSUE



Also available this month are WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED TALES. Watch for VAULT, CRIME and the new addition to the EC reprint titles, FRONTLINE COMBAT, next month. Don't forget CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details)!

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, $3 each. FRONT #1 & #2, $2 each; #3 others up thru issue #8, $1.50 each. Issues #4 and up, $2 each. Don't forget the entire 11-issue run of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION! Add $2 per order ($10 outside US) for S&H.

We want letters! Write to:
VAULT
GEMSTONE
P.O. Box 469
WEST PLAINE, MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
VAULT OF HORROR "#25" (#14, JUN/JUL 1952)

COVER by Johnny Craig	
"Seance!"	Johnny Craig
"Kickin' the Gong A Round!"	Jack Davis
"Practical Yoke!"	Jack Kamen
"Collection Completed!"	Graham Ingels

We welcome letters of comment! We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. To do so we code your address on the published letter.

Here's A Ghastly Easter Yarn! You Bunnies Should 'ear This...

PRACTICAL YOLK!

YOUR NAME IS *FREDRICK HAMILTON!* YOU ARE A WEALTHY SPORTSMAN AND WORLD-TRAVELER! SIX MONTHS AGO, YOU LEFT THE UNITED STATES FOR THE BELGIAN CONGO ON A HUNTING EXPEDITION! NOW, YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY HOME! AND YOU'RE BRINGING SOMEONE BACK...

YOU'LL *LIKE* AMERICA, B'UUNA! AND YOU'LL LIKE *LOUISE*, TOO!

LU-EEZ, MISSA NAMATIN? *WHO LU-EEZ?*

LOUISE IS MY *FIANCÉE*, B'UUNA.. MY *GIRL-FRIEND!* WE'RE GOING TO BE *MARRIED* RIGHT AFTER *EASTER!* THAT'S WHY I'M BRINGING YOU *BACK* WITH ME! YOU'LL BE OUR *HOUSE-BOY... SERVANT.* SAVVY?

I SAVVY, MISSA NAMATIN! I BE YOUR NUMBER-ONE MAN.. TAKE CARE *EVERY-THING!* THAT RIGHT?

THAT'S RIGHT, B'UUNA! LORD, IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE SEEN LOUISE! FROM NOW ON, I'M NEVER GOING TO LET HER OUT OF MY SIGHT!
YOU LOVE MISSY LU-EEZ, MISSA HANATIN?
CRAZY ABOUT HER! AND SHE LOVES ME! WE WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER!
THAT GOOD, MISSA HANATIN! I HAPPY THAT YOU HAPPY! YOU MY FRIEND!
AND YOU'RE MY FRIEND, B'UUNA! I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO REPAY YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE IN THE VELT-COUNTRY WHEN THAT RHINO ATTACKED!
I TAKE CARE OF YOU, MISSA NAMATIN! THAT MY JOB!
YES, DEAR READER! YOU'RE FREDRICK HAMILTON AND YOU OWE YOUR LIFE TO THIS SIMPLE AFRICAN NATIVE! WHY, BRINGING HIM TO AMERICA IS THE LEAST YOU CAN DO TO SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE! AND NOW THE BOAT THAT CARRIES YOU IS DOCKING, AND YOU'RE COMING DOWN THE GANGPLANK...
FRED! FRED! DARLING!
LOUISE! HONEY!
MISSA HANATIN! LOOK OUT!
YOU'RE LIKE A KID WHEN YOU SEE LOUISE! AND JUST LIKE AN AWKWARD KID, YOU TRIP GOING DOWN THE GANGPLANK! BUT THE BIG AFRICAN'S HANDS ARE AROUND YOU... AND HE STOPS YOU FROM FALLING...
YOU ALMOST FALL, MISSA! YOU WATCH CAREFUL NEXT TIME!
THANKS, B'UUNA!
WHO... WHO'S THAT, FRED?
LOUISE! THIS IS MY SAFARI LEADER! THE BEST GUIDE ON THE WHOLE AFRICAN CONTINENT! I'VE BROUGHT HIM BACK WITH ME TO BE OUR SERVANT! HIS NAME IS B'UUNA!
HOW DO YOU DO, B'UUNA?
I... GLAD MEET YOU, MISSY LU-EEZ!
YOU PASS THROUGH CUSTOMS AND HAIL A CAB! B'UUNA SITS BESIDE YOU WHILE LOUISE CHATTERS ABOUT THE WEDDING...
AND THE HARRINGTONS WILL BE THERE... AND THE UPJOHNS... AND... AND FREDRICK! YOU'RE NOT LISTENING!
OF COURSE NOT, HONEY! ALL I WANT TO DO IS LOOK AT YOU!
2

NOW, YOU'RE AT THE APARTMENT! YOU UNLOCK THE DOOR AND SWING IT OPEN! YOU STEP ASIDE AND LOUISE ENTERS! BUT...B'UUNA BALKS ..
COME IN, B'UUNA! WHAT'S WRONG?
HOLD IT, LOUISE! I THINK I KNOW!
GO AHEAD, B'UUNA!
THANK YOU MUCH, MISSA HAMATIN!
YOU'VE WATCHED THE RITUAL MANY TIMES BEFORE, BUT STILL IT FASCINATES YOU...
WHAT'S HE DOING, FREDERICK?
SH-H-HHHM! I'LL TELL YOU LATER!
TOOMBAH! TOOM-BAH MUWANA... VOOMBA.. MUWANA... SOOMBA...
THE NATIVE WRITHES AS HE UTTERS HIS STRANGE INCANTATIONS! SOON IT IS OVER! HE STEPS INSIDE...
WELL? AND WHAT WAS ALL THAT?
IT'S A TRIBAL RITUAL, LOUISE! B'UUNA'S A MEMBER OF A BLACK MAGIC CULT! THEY DARE NOT ENTER A STRANGE NEW DWELLING PLACE WITHOUT FIRST PERFORMING THAT RITUAL!
HOW EXCITING! BLACK MAGIC! WHAT ELSE DOES HE DO?
I WOULDN'T ASK HIM IF I WERE YOU, LOUISE! THESE NATIVES DON'T TALK ABOUT IT!
MISSA HAMATIN! MISSA HAMATIN!
B'UUNA STANDS AT THE WINDOW, STARING OUT AT THE BUILDINGS IN THE GATHERING TWILIGHT.
SOMETHING TO SEE, EH, B'UUNA? THOSE ARE THE SKYSCRAPERS I TOLD YOU ABOUT!
WE... WE NO FALL?
NO, B'UUNA! WE WON'T FALL! THIS HUT IS MADE STRONG...
THIS HUT NEEDS A GOOD DUSTING, MR. HAMILTON!
3

OH! STARTING TO NAG ALREADY... AND WE'RE NOT EVEN MARRIED!
WHERE'RE THE DUST-CLOTHS?
OH, NO YOU DON'T! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO START CLEANING UP! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN SIX MONTHS! SIT DOWN! I JUST WANT TO LOOK AT YOU!
STOP IT, FREDDY! YOU'LL BE SEEING ENOUGH OF ME FROM NOW ON! COME ON! WHERE ARE THE DUST-CLOTHS?
AFTER LOUISE LEAVES, B'UUNA LOOKS AT YOU QUESTIONINGLY...
WHAT'S WRONG, B'UUNA?
MISSA HAMATIN! YOU SURE MISSY LU-EEZ..SHE LOVE YOU?
OF COURSE, B'UUNA! SHE VERY PRETTY, MISSA HAMATIN!
ISN'T SHE BEAUTIFUL? I COULD LOOK AT HER ALL DAY!
LATER THAT NIGHT, LOUISE COMES BACK! SHE CARRIES A PACKAGE! YOU'RE PLEASED.. UNTIL YOU FIND OUT THAT IT'S NOT FOR YOU!
UH-UH! THIS IS FOR B'UUNA!
WELL! THAT'S A FINE HOW-DO-YOU-DO!
FOR ME, MISSY LU-EEZ?
T'U WATCH AS THE NATIVE STUGGLES WITH THE PACKAGE, TRYING TO UNWRAP IT! FINALLY HE DRAWS FORTH A GAILY DECORATED OVAL FORM...
WELL, I'LL BE...! I HAVEN'T SEEN ONE OF THOSE THINGS IN YEARS! A SCENIC EASTER-EGG!
EGG, MISSA HAMATIN? I EAT..?
OH, NO, B'UUNA! YOU LOOK IN IT? SEE THE LITTLE WINDOW? LOOK INSIDE! WHAT DO YOU SEE?
OH..OH...M'BUM! IS...LITTLE WORLD! LITTLE HARE WITH TINY EGGS... PRETTY COLORS... INSIDE!

IT'S THE EASTER BUNNY! HERE, LET ME SEE! SAY! THREE DIMENSIONAL...
I THOUGHT B'UUNA WOULD LIKE IT, FREDDY!
I LIKE FINE, MISSY LU-EEZ!
YOU WATCH B'UUNA AS HE GLIDES FROM THE ROOM, CLUTCHING HIS NEW GIFT! THEN LOUISE SPEARS TO YOU...
I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT MY MODELING JOB, HONEY! J.G DOESN'T WANT ME TO QUIT AFTER WE'RE MARRIED!
J.G CAN GO FLY A KITE!
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT B'UUNA CAN HEAR EVERY WORD THAT IS SPOKEN BETWEEN LOUISE AND YOU..
IT'S GOING TO LEAVE HIM WITHOUT A GOOD SIZE 12, FRED!
I REALLY DON'T CARE, HONEY! AFTER WE'RE MARRIED NOBODY LOOKS AT YOU BUT ME!
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT AN AFRICAN NATIVE'S SENSE OF HUMOR IS RATHER LIMITED.
OH! I SEE! AND I SUPPOSE ALL YOU'RE GOING TO DO IS SIT AND LOOK AT ME, AFTER WE'RE MARRIED!
UH-HUH! THAT'S ALL! JUST SIT AND LOOK!
...ESPECIALLY WHEN HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND INNUENDOES.
THEN I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER NOT MARRY YOU! THAT SOUNDS RATHER DULL!
OH, HONEY! YOU WOULDN'T THROW ME OVERBOARD, WOULD YOU?
...AND YOU DON'T KNOW THAT HE NEVER HEARS THE LAST OF THE CONVERSATION BECAUSE HE LEAVES IN ANGER...
NOT ON YOUR LIFE, DEAREST! I'D MARRY YOU EVEN IF IT MEANT TAKING IN LAUNDRY!
C'MERE, BABY!
OF COURSE, YOU'RE SURPRISED WHEN HE'S NOT AROUND TO ANSWER YOUR CALL AFTER LOUISE LEAVES.
B'UUNA? B'UUNA? NOW, WHERE IN BLAZES COULD HE HAVE GONE?

YOU NEVER HEAR LOUISE'S MUFFLED CRY AS A BLACK SHADOW SPRINGS UPON HER FROM THE DARKENED HALLWAY...
WHO. MMMMPH!
AND YOU'RE TOO BUSY WORRYING ABOUT B'UUNA'S WHEREABOUTS TO HEAR THE WEIRD INCANTATIONS THAT ECHO AND RE-ECHO IN THE APARTMENT-HOUSE CELLAR...
CRAZY FOOL! HE'LL GET LOST...SURE! HE DOESN'T KNOW HIS WAY AROUND AT ALL!
SO YOU'RE RELIEVED WHEN THE NATIVE REENTERS THE APARTMENT CLUTCHING HIS NEW SCENIC EASTER-EGG...
B'UUNA! YOU HAD ME WORRIED! WHERE IN BLAZES WERE YOU?
I TAKE CARE OF YOU, MISSA NAMATIN!
TAKE CARE OF ME? HOW?
YOU WANT TO LOOK AT MISSY LU-EEZ ALL DAY LONG? SHE NO WANT? SHE NO MARRY YOU? I FIX!
HUH? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? OH! THAT!
NOW YOU LOOK AT MISSY LU-EEZ ALL DAY LONG! SHE NO THROW OVER-BOARD! HERE!
HE HANDS YOU THE SCENIC EASTER-EGG, AND A COLD SHIVER OF TERROR RUNS UP YOUR SPINE! EVEN BEFORE YOU LIFT THE GAYLY-COLORED OVAL TO YOUR EYE AND PEER INTO THE WINDOW, YOU KNOW! AND YOU'RE RIGHT! LOUISE IS INSIDE! BY SOME FANTASTIC AFRICAN BLACK MAGIC, B'UUNA HAS SHRUNKEN LOUISE AND PLACED HER IN THE EGG! SHE SITS IN THE ARTIFICIAL GRASS, SMILING AT YOU.. AND YOU SCREAM...
YAAAAAAAAAAAH!
NOW YOU LOOK ALL DAY... ALL YOU WANT.. MISSA NAMATIN!
NEH, NEH! NOW THERE'S A DEAL! EASTER-EGGS LIKE B'UUNA'S WOULD KILL THE LITTLE TELESCOPE BUSINESS FAST! WITH SALS LIKE LOUISE INSIDE. BROTHER! OH, BY THE WAY! IF YOU'D LIKE ANOTHER DEAL, OUR OLD MAGS ARE AVAILABLE! HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WHAT I AND MY FELLOW GNOULUNATICS, THE CRYPT-KEEPER AND THE OLD WITCH, HAVE PRINTED IN OUR PERVERTED PERIODICALS SO FAR? IT'S GOOD READING! IF THIS MAGAZINE ISN'T GETTING TO YOUR NEWSSTAND, SUBSCRIBE! THE INFORMATION FOR OBTAINING YOURS IS IN MY COLUMN, THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER! NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE OLD WITCH!

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! SMELL IT? YEP, IT'S MY *CRUDDY CAULDRON!* I'VE LIT THE FIRE UNDER IT AND I'VE COOKED UP ANOTHER *TASTY TERROR-TIDBIT* JUST FOR YOU! SO COME SIT BESIDE YOUR HOSTESS IN *THE HAUNT OF FEAR... THE OLD WITCH..* AND I'LL FEED YOU A YARN IN WHICH THE *HORROR MOUNTS* BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS AS IT REARS ITS *SPINE-TINGLING FINISH.* I *CALL* THIS *SKIN-PIMPLER...*

COLLECTION COMPLETED!

ANITA TILLMAN'S LOVE FOR ANIMALS WAS NOT ABNORMAL! SHE AND HER HUSBAND JONAH HAD BEEN MARRIED FOR SIXTEEN YEARS! THEY HAD HAD NO CHILDREN! THUS, AS MIDDLE AGE CAME UPON ANITA SHE HAD TURNED HER FRUSTRATED MATERNAL INSTINCTS TOWARD ANY STRAY DOG CAT, OR BIRD THAT CROSSED HER PATH...

POOR THING! YOU LOOK SO *COLD* AND *HUNGRY!* YOU STAY RIGHT HERE AND I'LL GET YOU A CUP OF *WARM MILK!*

ANITA?

GHASTLY

JONAH TILLMAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, *DESPISED* ANIMALS! TO HIM, THEY WERE *PESTS*...PARASITES THAT LEECHED UPON HUMAN BEINGS FOR FOOD AND SHELTER WITHOUT GIVING ANYTHING IN RETURN.

ANITA! WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU *DOING?*

THIS POOR LITTLE KITTEN WAS CURLED UP ON OUR *DOOR-STEP*, JONAH! I THOUGHT

NEVER MIND *WHAT* YOU THOUGHT! SEND THE MISERABLE THING ON ITS WAY!

BUT IT'S *COLD*...AND *HUNGRY!*

IF YOU *FEED* IT, IT'LL HANG AROUND HERE FOR *GOOD!* I WON'T *HAVE* IT! *SCAT!* GO ON! *SCAT!*

STOP IT, JONAH! *STOP IT!* HERE, KITTY...KITTY! COME TO MAMA!

ANITA PICKED THE KITTEN UP IN HER ARMS AND CARESSED ITS FURRY TREMBLING FORM! JONAH GLARED AT IT..

LOOK AT IT, JONAH! IT'S *FRIGHTENED!* I'M GOING TO TAKE *CARE* OF IT! EVER SINCE THE *CANARY* DIED.

FIRST IT WAS *GOLD-FISH!* THEN A *CANARY!* NOW... A *CAT!*

PEOPLE *SHOULD* HAVE *HOBBIES!* IT KEEPS THEM *INTERESTED*... KEEPS THEM FROM BEING *BORED!* ANIMALS ARE *MY* HOBBY! I *LOVE* THEM! *YOU* SHOULD HAVE A *HOBBY*, TOO!

IS THAT SO? I SHOULD HAVE A *HOBBY*, EH? *ALL RIGHT!* I *WILL* START A *HOBBY!* YOU'LL *SEE!*

THE NEXT DAY, ANITA LOOKED UP FROM FONDLING 'MEW-MEW' THE NAME SHE'D GIVEN THE CAT TO SEE JONAH COME INTO THE HOUSE AND START DOWN THE CELLAR LOADED WITH PACKAGES

WHY JONAH! WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THERE?

YOU *WANTED* ME TO START A *HOBBY*. DIDN'T YOU? OKAY! I'M *STARTING ONE!*

JONAH STAMPED DOWN THE CELLAR STEPS WITH HIS BUNDLES! HE BEGAN TO UNWRAP THEM AND LINE HIS WORK-TABLE WITH THEIR CONTENTS! *KNIVES*...AND OTHER STRANGE IMPLIMENTS! SPOOLS OF WIRE! JARS OF *ACID*...AND OTHER WEIRD LIQUIDS! ANITA STARED AT THE ARRAY OF MATERIAL HE'D PURCHASED

YOU...YOU MUST HAVE SPENT AN *AWFUL LOT* OF *MONEY* ON THESE...THESE THINGS, JONAH!

SO WHAT! YOU DON'T CARE WHEN *YOU* SPEND *MONEY* TO FEED YOUR *PETS!* WHAT ABOUT THAT *BIRD-BATH* YOU BOUGHT.. ?

...AND THE BREAD YOU WASTE FEEDING THEM? AND THE CANARY CAGE YOU GOT? IT'S RUSTING IN A CLOSET NOW...
...THAT'S BECAUSE YOU WON'T LET ME BUY ANOTHER CANARY!
AND THE SAND AND CHARCOAL AND BIRD-SEED YOU HAD TO BUY FOR IT? AND THE MILK FOR THAT DIRTY MANGY CAT..?
...THIS CAT IS NOT DIRTY! I BATHED IT TODAY!
...NOT TO MENTION THE COUNTLESS STRAY MUTTS YOU'VE FED! WHAT ABOUT ALL OF THEM?
JONAH... YOU DON'T REALLY HATE ANIMALS AS MUCH AS THAT, DO YOU?
I DESPISE THEM! BUT NOW I'VE GOT A HOBBY! A HOBBY I'LL LOVE! YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS, ANITA? CAN YOU GUESS? CAN YOU?
I... I HAVEN'T ANY IDEA! WHAT?
TAXIDERMY! I'M GOING TO STUFF ANIMALS. D'YOU HEAR? STUFF THEM!
NO! NOT YOU COULDN'T! IT'S CRUEL! ANIMALS ARE LIVING THINGS! THEY SHOULD BE GIVEN DECENT BURIALS! STUFFING THEM IS SO... SO BARBARIC!
YOU KNOW THAT MOUSE WE HEAR AT NIGHT... RUNNING THROUGH THE WALLS?
THE POOR LITTLE THING! I LEAVE A LITTLE CHEESE FOR IT TO NIBBLE ON!
THAT'S GOING TO BE MY FIRST SPECIMEN! SEE! A TRAP! THIS WILL CATCH HIM WITHOUT SQUASHING HIM!
JONAH! HOW COULD YOU? HOW COULD YOU BE SO SPITEFUL? YOU'RE... THIS BECAUSE YOU KNOW I LOVE ANIMALS... AREN'T YOU? YOU'RE DOING THIS TO HURT ME!
3

HEE, HEE! THIS ANITA'S A REAL BRIGHT BROAD...EN, KIDDIES? SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE HIT ON THE HEAD WITH A BRICK, DOES SHE? SO JONAH'S GONNA START STUFFING ANIMALS! WELL, ANYWAY, IT'S A FULFILLING AMBITION...HEE, HEE! NOW TO GET ON WITH OUR STORY! THAT EVENING, JONAH AND ANITA SAT IN SILENCE.
ANITA PLAYED WITH HER KITTEN WHILE JONAH READ HIS BOOK ON TAXIDERMY
LISTEN TO THIS, ANITA! 'SLIT THE MAMMAL TO BE STUFFED FROM A POINT BETWEEN THE FRONT LEGS TO THE REAR! WORK THE SKIN DOWN EACH SIDE OF THE BODY, CUTTING AWAY THE FLESH CLOSE TO THE SKIN! THEN '
STOP IT, JONAH! STOP IT!
LISTEN! 'THE TAIL IS REMOVED IN ONE PIECE BY PULLING IT FROM THE SKIN
YOU'RE DISGUSTING!
ME? IT SAYS SO RIGHT HERE! SEE? 'THEN BY TURNING THE SKIN INSIDE OUT AND PULLING IT...THE SKULL IS REMOVED, CUTTING AWAY THE SKIN WHERE IT JOINS THE TEETH AND GUMS' BY. '
ANITA SPUN AROUND AND RUSHED UPSTAIRS, RETCHING...
HEH, HEH! GOOD NIGHT, ANITA!
THE NEXT DAY, WHILE ANITA FINISHED BREAKFAST, JONAH WENT DOWN INTO THE CELLAR! WHEN HE CAME UP, HE CARRIED THE TRAP! A SQUEALING MOUSE WAS CAUGHT INSIDE...
LOOK, ANITA! SUCCESS! I'VE CAUGHT OUR MOUSE!
GASP!...NO! OH, OH, NO!
I'M GOING TO WORK NOW, ANITA! WHEN I COME HOME I'M GOING TO STUFF HIM! YOU, YOU'D BETTER NOT LET HIM GO IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!
YOU...YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LEAVE HIM IN THERE ALL DAY, ARE YOU? YOU CAN'T DO IT! IT'S HEARTLESS!
4

HEE, HEE! BUT JONAH DID LEAVE THE MOUSE IN THE TRAP ALL DAY! ANITA HAD TO TAKE HER KITTEN AND RUN OUT OF THE HOUSE BECAUSE SHE COULDN'T STAND THE POOR THING'S SQUEALING! THAT NIGHT, WHEN JONAH CAME HOME FROM WORK, HE WENT DIRECTLY TO THE CELLAR...
AFTER A WHILE, JONAH CAME UP! HE HELD A BOARD IN HIS HAND! THE MOUSE SKIN WAS TACKED TO IT...
LOOK, ANITA! NOW I HAVE TO DRY IT AND TAN IT! THEN...
EEEEEEEE!
JONAH MADE LIFE MISERABLE FOR ANITA IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED...
LOOK, ANITA! I'VE WIRED UP THE SKELETON! SEE?
GO AWAY! GO AWAY FROM ME!
FINALLY, THE MOUSE WAS STUFFED...
FINISHED! ANITA WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I HATE YOU! HATE YOU!
JONAH STARTED ON ANOTHER SPECIMEN! HE CAUGHT A BLUE-JAY IN AN INGENIOUS TRAP...
LOOK, ANITA! CAUGHT 'IM TODAY! IT'S A JAY-BIRD! WHAT A BEAUTY!
LET HIM GO! PLEASE, JONAH! PLEASE!
HE LURED A SQUIRREL WITH A NUT...
C'MERE, YUH LIL'
JONAH! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!
HE WOULD COME HOME AT NIGHT WITH CARTONS AND THINGS WOULD BE SCRATCHING INSIDE THEM...
A PIGEON! CAUGHT IT IN THE PARK!
JONAH... SOB! HAVE PITY ON THEM... AND ME!
AND JONAH'S COLLECTION GREW! ONE DAY...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT DOG, JONAH?
DIDN'T HAVE A COLLAR ON IT! IT'S A STRAY! IT'S TOUGH BUILDIN UP A COLLECTION WHEN YOU LIVE IN THE CITY.
SOL
5

NEE, NEE! I'LL SAY IT'S TOUGH FINDING ANIMALS IN A CITY! BUT JONAH DID ALL RIGHT! HIS COLLECTION GREW AS FAST AS ANITA'S HATRED FOR HIM! SOON HE HAD ONE NOUSE, ONE RAT, ONE BLUEJAY, ONE ROBIN, ONE SPANROW, TWO PIGEONS, ONE SQUIRREL, AND ONE DOG!
WHY WON'T YOU DOME LOOK AT MY COLLECTION, ANITA? WHY? DON'T YOU LIKE ANIMALS ANYMORE?
OF COURSE I LIKE ANIMALS... LIVE ANIMALS!
I'VE GOT ALMOST A COMPLETE COLLECTION, ANITA! COME SEE!
NO! NO! I HATE YOU! LEAVE ME ALONE! LEAVE ME ALONE!
ONE DAY...
HERE, MEW-MEW! HERE, KITTY KITTY! OH DEAR, WHERE ARE YOU?
ANITA SEARCHED THE HOUSE HIGH AND LOW FOR HER PET CAT! FINALLY SHE STOOD BEFORE THE CELLAR DOOR...
JONAH, HE..HE WOULDN'T? HE WOULDN'T DARE! NOT MEW-MEW!
JONAH WAS DOWN THERE! ANITA COULD HEAR HIM PUTTERING! SHE OPENED THE CELLAR DOOR SLOWLY! SHE HADN'T BEEN DOWN THERE SINCE JONAH'D STARTED ON HIS HORRIBLE HOBBY..
JONAH? DID...DID YOU SEE MEW-MEW?
HUH? WHO?
MY CAT? DID YOU SEE MY CAT?
COME DOWN, ANITA! COME ALL THE WAY DOWN! SEE MY COLLECTION!
6

JONAH STOOD THERE SNEERING AT ANITA! HE POINTED TO THE ARRAY OF STUFFED ANIMALS...THE MOUSE, THE RAT, THE ASSORTED BIRDS...
HOW..HOW CRUEL!
THE SQUIRREL, THE DOG... AND GASP...
...IT SAT ON ITS HAUNCHES...GRINNING AT ANITA! IT LOOKED ALMOST ALIVE...
IT...IT COMPLETES MY COLLECTION, ANITA!
JONAH! YOU...YOU KILLED MY CAT!
ANITA'S EYES BULGED! HER FACE FLUSHED CRIMSON! THE GLEAMING KNIFE ON JONAH'S WORK-TABLE SPANKLED UNDER THE OVERHEAD LIGHT...
SEE! NOW I HAVE A COMPLETE COLLECTION! ALL OF THE ANIMALS FOUND IN THE CITY! ALL STUFFED!
NOT ALL...JONAH! YOU FORGOT ONE TYPE OF ANIMAL...
ANITA SNATCHED THE KNIFE FROM THE TABLE! JONAH'S MOUTH FELL OPEN! HE STARED IN HONROR AT HIS DETERMINED WIFE...
ANITA! P-P-PUT DOWN THAT KNIFE! YOU...YOU COULDN'T...
COULDN'T I, JONAH? COULDN'T I...?
I'M NOT SURE! I THINK IT WAS A NEIGHBOR WHO FIRST FOUND THEM! ANITA WAS SITTING ON THE CELLAR FLOOR, BABBLING INCOHERENTLY! SHE HELD THE STUFFED FORM OF MEW-MEW IN HER ARMS, STROKING IT GENTLY! JONAH STOOD ABOVE THEM! ANITA'S JOB HAD BEEN A CRUDE ONE! HERE AND THERE, THE STITCHES SHOWED! THE GLASS EYES DIDN'T SET EXACTLY RIGHT! TO A PROFESSIONAL TAXIDERMIST, IT MAY HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED A POOR JOB! TO JONAH, IT DIDN'T MATTER! FOR JONAH HAD BEEN STUFFED AND MOUNTED...
HEE, HEE! YEP, ANITA COMPLETED JONAH'S COLLECTION FOR HIM. BY MAKING HIM PART OF IT! ANITA MAY HAVE SEEMED A BIT STUFFY TO JONAH AT TIMES...BUT IN THE END IT WAS HE WHO WAS THE STUFFED-SHIRT! JONAH JUST GOT UNDER ANITA'S SKIN ONCE TOO OFTEN...HEE, HEE.. SO SHE FINALLY GOT UNDER HIS! LEFT HIM IN STITCHES TOO! BY THE WAY! IF ANYBODY'S INTERESTED IN A MOUNTED HUMAN FIGURE.. HEE, HEE. THERE'S A STATUE OF GENERAL JACKSON IN THE PARK! WELL, THAT'S ENOUGH HORSING AROUND! 'BYE, NOW!

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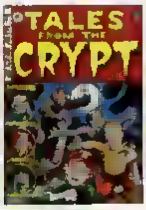

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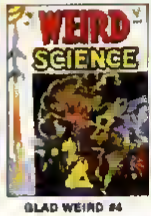

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